

# NATURAL HEALTH SERVICES

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## **Cottonseed oil is NOT a food oil!**

**By Keith Post, ND**

How many people actually read the labels of the packaged foods that they buy? I think that it is a good idea to try to understand what we are putting into our bodies. Here is a helpful tip: food labels are always supposed to list ingredients in the order of quantity, from highest quantity to lowest quantity.

Let's take a simple example. The food label on most packages of potato chips will usually read something like this: potatoes, vegetable oil and salt. The larger food conglomerate corporations will often list their vegetable oil in this manner: "may contain corn, safflower, soybean or cottonseed oils".

What does language like this really mean? It means that they are unable to specify exactly which oil(s) were used in that exact bag, because the corporations buy whatever is least expensive on the international market at any given time.

Cottonseed oil is often used. This is because, quite simply, cottonseed oil is a waste product of the cotton industry, so it costs the food manufacturers next to nothing to procure a plentiful supply. The only problem with this is that cotton is not a food crop, therefore is not subject to the same restrictions as to pesticide and fungicide levels. In fact, cotton is one of the most heavily sprayed crops in the world, due to its susceptibility to the threats of insect predators, such as the boll weevil. Therefore, I would be very concerned about consuming any food product made using cottonseed oil on a habitual basis, wouldn't you?

It is interesting to note that a casual Internet search brings up no articles condemning the use of cottonseed oil in food products. There is, however, a website supporting and promoting the cottonseed oil industry. References are made to the seed's mild, nut-like flavor and stability at high temperatures. The address is [www.cottonseedmeal.com](http://www.cottonseedmeal.com)

In closing, let me just say that smaller, regionally made chip producers, such as Kettle Chips, never use cottonseed oil in any of their products.

*This commentary was written by Keith Post, ND, a board-licensed physician practicing in the Portland, Oregon area and is available online at <http://naturalhealthservices.info>.*